

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7-10, 12-14, 17, 19 and 22 are amended to clarify the recited features and claim 25 is added. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is requested to consider the reference cited in the attached Information Disclosure Statement and return to Applicants' undersigned representative a fully initialed form PTO-1449.

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 9-12 and 17-19 recite allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are allowable for the reasons set forth below.

The Office Action objects to claim 7 because of an informality. The objection is obviated by the amendments to claim 7. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 22 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Bailie et al. (Bailie), U.S. Patent No. 6,486,773. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Bailie does not disclose or suggest a plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices which are not connected to each other, the plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices provided at least at one vehicle wheel, as recited in independent claim 1 and similarly recited in independent claim 22.

Bailie discloses a single transmitter 12 located at each tire T(1)-T(4) of a vehicle (see col. 2, lines 30-40 and Fig. 1). Bailie does not disclose or suggest a plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices which are not connected to each other provided at least at one vehicle wheel. Thus, independent claims 1 and 22 are patentable over Bailie.

Because claims 2 and 24 incorporate the features of independent claims 1 and 22, respectively, these claims also are patentable over Bailie for at least this reason, as well as for the additional features that these claims recite. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 3-8 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Bailie in view of Katou, U.S. Patent No. 6,954,688. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Because claims 3-8 and 23 incorporate the features of independent claims 1 and 22, respectively, these claims also are patentable over the cited references for at least this reason, as well as for the additional features that these claims recite. Further, Katou is not prior art against this application. Applicants' claimed foreign priority is to Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-333003, filed September 25, 2003. Katou was filed in the United States on October 15, 2003, after Applicants' priority date. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 13, 14, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Lill; U.S. Patent No. 6,897,770. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Lill does not disclose or suggest a plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices which are provided at least at one vehicle wheel, wherein each vehicle wheel communication device comprises a sensor, the plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices include a first vehicle wheel communication device that directly and wirelessly communicates with the vehicle body communication device, and a second vehicle wheel communication device that wirelessly communicates with the first vehicle wheel communication device and indirectly communicates with the vehicle body communication device by using the first vehicle wheel communication device as a relay, as recited in independent claim 13.

Lill discloses a tire pressure monitor 14 at each tire 18 (see Fig. 1 and col. 3, lines 54-56) that transmits a tire pressure signal to a transponder 16, which then transmits the signal to

central system receiver 20 (see col. 5, lines 1-16). The Office Action asserts that transponder 16 corresponds to the claimed first vehicle wheel communication device. However, transponder 16 is not provided at a single vehicle wheel, but is fixedly mounted to the wheel well, frame of the vehicle or axle of the vehicle (see col. 4, lines 11-16). Further, transponder 16 only includes a signal receiver 26, a microprocessor 28, a transponder transmitter 30 and an antenna 31 (see col. 4, lines 25-27). Therefore, transponder 16 does not correspond to the claimed first vehicle wheel communication device because it is not located at a single vehicle wheel and does not have a sensor. Therefore, Lill does not disclose or suggest a plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices which are provided at least at one vehicle wheel, wherein each vehicle wheel communication device comprises a sensor, the plurality of vehicle wheel communication devices include a first vehicle wheel communication device that directly and wirelessly communicates with the vehicle body communication device, and a second vehicle wheel communication device that wirelessly communicates with the first vehicle wheel communication device and indirectly communicates with the vehicle body communication device by using the first vehicle wheel communication device as a relay, as recited in independent claim 13. Therefore, claim 13 is patentable over Lill.

Because claims 14, 20 and 21 incorporate the features of claim 13, these claims also are patentable over Lill for at least this reason, as well as for the additional features that these claims recite. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lill in view of Bailie. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Because claims 15 and 16 incorporate the features of claim 13, and because Bailie fails to overcome the deficiencies of Lill, these claims are patentable over the cited references for at least this reason, as well as for the additional features that these claims recite. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Applicants further submit that added claim 25 also is patentable over the cited references.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Amendment Transmittal
Information Disclosure Statement

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